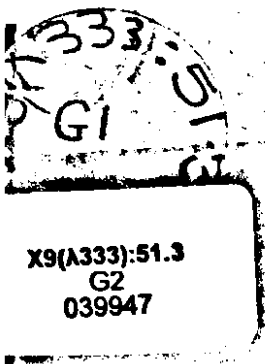


MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

Report on the Marketing of Sheep, Mutton

and Lamb in England and Wales





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this Series see inside of cover.)

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

Report on the  
MARKETING OF SHEEP,  
MUTTON AND LAMB  
IN  
ENGLAND AND WALES.

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FIG. 1.—Lambing Pens on the marshes at Walton-on-the-Naze.



## THE MARKETING OF SHEEP, MUTTON AND LAMB IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

---

### INTRODUCTION.

The following Report embodies the results of a detailed investigation of the marketing of sheep and lambs, both store and fat, and of mutton and lamb in England and Wales. Reports have been previously issued on the trade in other kinds of livestock and meat—viz., refrigerated beef, mutton and lamb (Economic Series No. 6), pigs (Economic Series No. 12), pork and bacon (Economic Series No. 17) and cattle and beef (Economic Series No. 20). The veal trade and the trade in hides and skins will be the subjects of separate reports.

The sheep industry is one of the most important branches of British agriculture. The value of the annual output of mutton and lamb in Great Britain in 1929 was almost £24 million; that of the wool, which in this country is a secondary product, is estimated in recent years at approximately a further £4 million.

The full importance of the industry cannot, however, be measured solely by the intrinsic value of its saleable products. Sheep, on farms where they are kept on arable land, are of great value in increasing the fertility and improving the texture of the soil. On many farms, indeed, this indirect value has, in the past, provided the main motive for the keeping of sheep at all. In some areas, notably in mountainous districts, the keeping of sheep is virtually the only kind of farming that can be practised.

It is unnecessary in these days to emphasize the fact that methods of marketing may make all the difference between profit and loss. In the case of livestock, moreover, although the producer's direct part in marketing generally ceases when the animal is sold, his returns are directly affected by the economy and efficiency of the methods subsequently used both in the slaughtering and dressing of his stock and in the distribution of the meat and offals. Indeed, the most important marketing improvements suggested in the following pages, viz., the improvement of slaughtering facilities and the establishment of a grading and marking scheme for mutton and lamb concern those operations which, under present conditions, take place after the stock has left the producer's hands.

This is not to say, however, that the producer cannot take any active part in the better marketing of mutton and lamb in this country. The Report discusses the possibility of the development of producers' livestock selling organizations. If this should prove to be the line of advance in sheep and lamb marketing,

such organizations could not only effect a better co-ordination of supply with demand as regards both quantity and quality, as well as carry out such essential work as publicity in favour of the home-killed product, but, if comprehensive, they would be in a position to encourage the adoption by the trade of a standardized system of carcase-grading and the provision of a more efficient and economic slaughtering system. It may, in short, be expected that, actuated by their own interests, producers of any commodity or group of related commodities, comprehensively organized for marketing purposes, will also give a definite urge to the progress of rationalization in the field of processing and distribution.

---

#### *NOTE ON NOMENCLATURE.*

In preparing this Report, some difficulty has been found in deciding upon the terms to be used to describe sheep of various ages and sexes, owing to the great variation in local usage throughout the country. As far as possible, terms having only a local or limited use have been avoided. The following is a brief explanation of certain of the terms adopted in this Report.

The word "lamb" has been defined as "a young ovine animal that has not acquired its first pair of permanent teeth," and this is broadly the sense in which the word is used in this Report. As is pointed out later, however, the limits of the lamb class are not clearly definable, and practice varies in different parts of the country, size being often the determining factor rather than age.

"Hogget" is used to describe a sheep that has passed the lamb stage but has not reached the period for clipping. A "wether hogget" is, of course, a castrated male, a "ewe hogget" a female. "Ewe hoggets" are described in some parts of the country as "theaves," "gimmers" or "chilvers." The words "teg" and "hogg" are often used in the same sense as "hogget," but are generally applied to somewhat older animals—i.e., to yearlings, or sheep from about 8 to 15 months old. The terms "teggings" and "hoggetting" both refer to the practice of folding "tegs" or "hoggets" on arable crops.

Castrated male sheep that have been clipped are described as "shearling wethers," and when wethers were formerly kept on for several years they were commonly referred to as "2-shear," "3-shear," and so on, according to the number of shearing periods which they had passed. Wether sheep, however, are nowadays rarely kept past the shearling stage.

An old ewe, past breeding, is sometimes referred to as a "crone."

---

## APPENDIX.

UNITED STATES MARKET CLASSES AND GRADES OF  
SHEEP AND LAMBS.

| Class.                    | Sub-class.            | Age Selection. | Weight Selection.                         | Grade.                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>SHEEP.</i>             |                       |                |                                           |                                                                                                           |
| <i>Ewes ... Slaughter</i> | Yearling              | ...            | Light weight and Handy weight—90 lb. down | Prime or No. A<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |
|                           |                       |                | Medium weight—90–100 lb.                  | Prime or No. A<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |
|                           |                       |                | Heavy weight—100 lb. up                   | Prime or No. A<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |
|                           | 2 years old and over. |                | Light weight—100 lb. down                 | Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5                   |
|                           |                       |                | Handy weight—100–120 lb.                  | Prime or No. A<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |
|                           |                       |                | Medium weight—120–140 lb.                 | Prime or No. A<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |
|                           |                       |                | Heavy weight—140 lb. up                   | Prime or No. A<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                  |

| Class. | Sub-class. | Age Selection.       | Weight Selection.            | Grade             |
|--------|------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Ewes   | Feeder     | All ages             | All weights                  | Choice or No. 1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Good or No. 2     |
|        |            |                      |                              | Medium or No. 3   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Common or No. 4   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Inferior or No. 5 |
|        | Breeder    | Yearling             | Light weight<br>90 lb. down  | Fancy or No. A1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Choice or No. 1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Good or No. 2     |
|        |            |                      |                              | Medium or No. 3   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Common or No. 4   |
|        |            |                      | Medium weight<br>90-100 lb.  | Fancy or No. A1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Choice or No. 1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Good or No. 2     |
|        |            |                      |                              | Medium or No. 3   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Common or No. 4   |
|        |            |                      | Heavy weight<br>100 lb. up   | Fancy or No. A1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Choice or No. 1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Good or No. 2     |
|        |            |                      |                              | Medium or No. 3   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Common or No. 4   |
|        |            | 2 and 3 years<br>old | Light weight<br>100 lb. down | Fancy or No. A1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Choice or No. 1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Good or No. 2     |
|        |            |                      |                              | Medium or No. 3   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Common or No. 4   |
|        |            |                      | Medium weight<br>100-125 lb. | Fancy or No. A1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Choice or No. 1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Good or No. 2     |
|        |            |                      |                              | Medium or No. 3   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Common or No. 4   |
|        |            |                      | Heavy weight<br>125 lb up    | Fancy or No. A1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Choice or No. 1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Good or No. 2     |
|        |            |                      |                              | Medium or No. 3   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Common or No. 4   |
|        |            | 1 year old           | Light weight<br>100 lb. down | Fancy or No. A1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Choice or No. 1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Good or No. 2     |
|        |            |                      |                              | Medium or No. 3   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Common or No. 4   |
|        |            |                      | Medium weight<br>100-125 lb. | Fancy or No. A1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Choice or No. 1   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Good or No. 2     |
|        |            |                      |                              | Medium or No. 3   |
|        |            |                      |                              | Common or No. 4   |

| Class.    | Sub-class.            | Age Selection. | Weight Selection.              | Grade.                                                                                                          |
|-----------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Slaughter | 5 years old and over. |                | Heavy weight —<br>125 lb. up   | {<br>Fancy or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                  |
|           |                       |                | Light weight —<br>100 lb. down | {<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                                     |
|           |                       |                | Medium weight —<br>100-125 lb. | {<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                                     |
|           |                       |                | Heavy weight —<br>125 lb. up   | {<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                                     |
|           |                       | Yearling ...   | Light weight —<br>90 lb. down  | {<br>Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |
|           |                       |                | Handy weight —<br>90-100 lb.   | {<br>Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |
|           |                       |                | Medium weight —<br>100-110 lb. | {<br>Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                  |
|           |                       |                | Heavy weight —<br>110 lb. up   | {<br>Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                  |
|           |                       |                | Light weight —<br>100 lb. down | {<br>Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |
|           |                       |                |                                |                                                                                                                 |

| Class.   | Sub-class. | Age Selection.           | Weight Selection.             | Grade.                                                                                                     |
|----------|------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wethers  |            | 2 years old and over ... | Handy weight —<br>100–115 lb. | Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |
|          |            |                          | Medium weight—<br>115–130 lb. | Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                  |
|          |            |                          | Heavy weight —<br>130 lb. up  | Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                  |
|          | Feeder ... | Yearling ...             | All weights ...               | Fancy or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                  |
|          |            | 2 years old and over     | All weights ...               | Fancy or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                  |
| Rams ... | Slaughter  | Yearling ...             | All weights ...               | Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                                                        |
|          |            | 2 years old and over.    | All weights ...               | Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                                                        |
| LAMBS.   |            |                          |                               |                                                                                                            |
|          | Slaughter  | Spring ...               | All weights                   | Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |
|          |            |                          | Light weight —<br>70 lb. down | Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5 |

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| Class. | Sub-class.  | Age Selection. | Weight Selection.             | Grade.                                                                                                           |
|--------|-------------|----------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lambs  | Lamb        | ...            | Handy weight —<br>70-80 lb.   | { Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5     |
|        |             |                | Medium weight —<br>80-90 lb.  | { Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5     |
|        |             |                | Heavy weight —<br>90 lb. up   | { Prime or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Cull or No. 5     |
|        | Feeder ...  | All ages       | Light weight —<br>60 lb. down | { Fancy or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4<br>Inferior or No. 5 |
|        |             |                | Medium weight —<br>60-70 lb.  | { Fancy or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                      |
|        |             |                | Heavy weight —<br>70 lb. up   | { Fancy or No. A1<br>Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3<br>Common or No. 4                      |
|        | Shearer ... | All ages       | Light weight —<br>70 lb. down | { Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3                                                            |
|        |             |                | Medium weight —<br>70-80 lb.  | { Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3                                                            |
|        |             |                | Heavy weight —<br>80 lb. up   | { Choice or No. 1<br>Good or No. 2<br>Medium or No. 3                                                            |